bacco which is normally above the Minimum Support Price;

(iii) Opening 3 additional auction platforms in Andhra Pradesh at Vellampalli, Podili and Kandukur.

Quasi-Judicial Awthorijfy to probe the *bbsages* of dumping newisprnt *horn* USA, Canada and Rusai

2197. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased *to* state;

(a) whether an independent Quasi-Judi cial Authority was set up by Government to probe the charges of dumping news print from USA, Canda and Russia at Prices far below the prices prevailing in their home markets;

(b) whether the Designated Authority has recommended imposition of provisional anti-dumping duty as per the established practeice;

(c) whether the Designated Authority after the through enquiry as per the required procedure confirmed the charges of dumpings; and

(d) if So, when the recommendations were made and the action taken by thei Government so far on the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BALLA BULI RAMAIAH):) (a) to (d) The Designated Authority appointed under the Anti Dumping Act and the Rules made thereu'.der, is conducting 'n-vestigations into the existence, degree! and (effect of alleged dumping of newsprint from USA, Ca'nada and Russia. The Designated Authority has notified preliminary findings recommendi'ng Imposition of provisional anti-dumpilng duties and the investigations are continuing. Thfe findings were sent to Ministry of Finance on 11-6-1997 to take a view on the recommejadations for imposition of provisional anti dumping duties.

Export of poor quality of Basinati

2198. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any complaint from European Unions about the poor quality of Ba'smati parboiled exports and if so, the details thereof-

(b) whether it is a feet that European U-nion import norms are increasingly being dictated by US Lobbies intending to keep Indian exporters out of competition from their EU markets; and

(c) whether Government have taken up the matter with the European U'nion, and if so, with what result?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MIN'STRY OF COMMERCE SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) The European Commission has requested the Government of India to ensure that the quality of .Indian basmati rice be main-tai-ned as some poor quality parboiled rice h'a's been coming in the Eurbnean Union market

(b) and fc) The Europepn CommissiO'n has introduced a cumulative recovery system, for a trial period of 1 year i.e. from 01.07.1997, for determining certain; import duties on rice as a consequence of an agreement reached with the GovernI ment of United States of America in the form of exchange of letters on cereals" and rice. India has made its position kpown *to* the.European Union through the diplomatic channelss.

Review of *export S*triategy

2199. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

SHRI GRUFRAN AZAM:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ASSOCHAM has tir-ged Government to review export strategy and evolve plans to boost exports;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether Gover'nment propose to diversify exports *to* many new markets in

the v-'orld; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MFNTSTER OF STATE OF THE MfNiSTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BALLA BULI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) The ASSOCHAM has represented to the Government to remove constraints which emanate from problems of infrastructure particularly in ports, airports availability of railway wagons and roads. They have also requested the Government, inter-alia to make the SAFTA an effective forum, establish parity of Rupee and Dollar, establish better relations with ASEAN countries, improve product-mix for export, promote Indian Brand Equiiy, set up Warehousing facilities abroad, combat tnon-tariff barriers and establish quality management.

(c) and (d) The Governm-nent facilities efforts to explore now market and products. A number of markets were explored for specific expoir'ts during the last year which include South Africa Botswana, Swaziland, Argentina, Brazil and Israel. The border trade with Mye-mmar, is also being promoted. The medium term export strategy being formulated by the Ministry will include efforts to widen our presence by expanding exports to cover new markets which are important globally.

Import al RBD Pafmoline through SIC

2200. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact inat Govern ment has recently decided to ianiport the RBD Palmoline On P.O.B. througih STC instead of C&F and whether any reprefsen-tation has been received i!n this regard, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also a fact that that *Go-vernment* had suffered a loss of huge quantity of foreign exchange by importing the oil on C&F basis and intermedia-ries has made huge profits by importing thi soil through STC on C&F basis; and

(c) by when the import of this oil' *FOB i's* to start; and if not, the reasons, therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY, OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULI RAMAMIAH): (a) to (c) STC is the cAnalisi-ng agency for im port of RBD almoline or supply under Public Distribution System as per the connected policy of the Govt, in the Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs In terms of the exi'sting policy, while all import contracts are to be finalised on FOB basis; STC has been imiporting edi ble oil for PDS for a number of years of CIF (Cost In'surance Freight) terms after obtaining necessary exemption from the Ministry of Surface Transport as CIF imports are more convenient and economical.

An individual representation has been received, in which a plea has been made to effect import of food items on FQB basis.

Since the year 1990-91, STC has, however, been i;ncurring losses in its edible oil operations for PDS mainly due to the devaluation of the Rupee and the actual landed cost of the imported pal-moline being higher 'than the Central' ftsue Price charged from the States. The Govt, has been recouping the deficit in Edible Oil Account by providing finalp-cial assistance to STC from time to time.

As a matter of policy for the import of edible oils, STC deals directly oni principal to principal basis without inter-' mediaries.

Shifting of items *from* sicial impor/ *llceikei li*st to OGiL, liifei

2201. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) government havg recently